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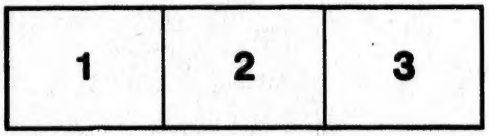
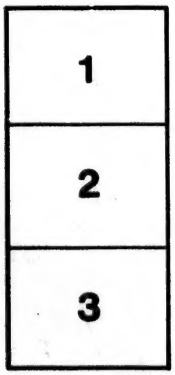
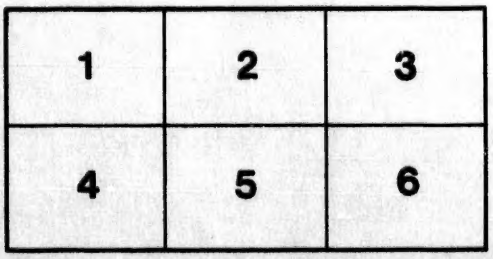






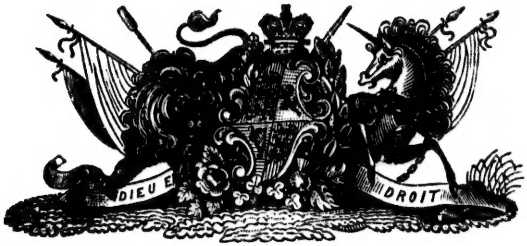
Crisis in North America!

SLAVERY, WAR, BALANCE OF POWER, AND OREGON.

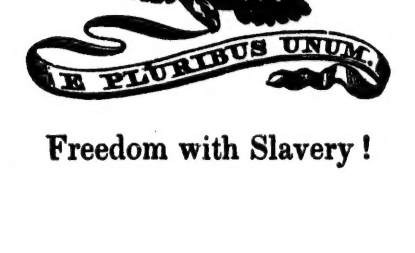
BY ISRAEL LEWIS,
COLOURED MAN!

MONTREAL,
APRIL, 1846.

HARRISON, PRINTER, MONTREAL.



Freedom without Slavery!



Freedom with Slavery!

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Consultation Committee of Coloured People of Montreal, met according to notice for the purpose of Petitioning Her Majesty to allow the organizing of 100,000 Coloured Men from all parts of the world, to assemble at Niagara for the purpose of putting an end to SLAVERY.

Mr. Moses Carter, being appointed Chairman, and Mr. P. J. Lee, Secretary.

It was moved by Mr. Paul, and seconded by Mr. Dego, that Mr. Israel Lewis report his Preamble and Resolutions ; adopted.

Mr. Lewis then submitted the following.

"WHEREAS, we believe that all the human race that are found on this great globe, are the children of one Almighty Parent, who has declared that, "He of one Blood has made all men." And whereas, He hath said "I am no respector of persons." "The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots; and Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God."

AND WHEREAS, we believe that black men have souls, to be saved or lost, as well as white men, and that black men have the same love for liberty as

white men, such as the liberty of his body and mind, the right of the franchise, reading of the bible, the observance and keeping the sabbath-day, a proper knowledge of the Saviour and his mission into this world; also to enjoy the company of his wife and children, so he may educate them, that they may acquire true religion, industry and economy, and thereby enjoy the fruits of his labor.

And Whereas, there is a state of slavery and degradation on this continent, which is at this moment deprivivg *four millions* of our race of all the blessings above mentioned, intended for them as part and parcel of the human race; and they are deprived of their rights in various ways, many of which are too shocking to submit to the people of Canada; they part man, wife and child, as the Canadian farmer does his lambs, pigs and calves! And send them to every market in the slave holding regions, to be butchered or used in any other way that their purchasers think most to their profit.

The ungodly slave-holder, seduces the helpless unoffending slave-woman, and she is compelled to act as the lamb who licks the knife of its bloody slaughterer! Many of the slave-holders treat their slaves in the most barbarous manner, they shoot them! They brand them!! They dirk them, and starve them!!! These poor coloured fellow-creatures, move about with their heads bowed down, almost afraid even to look at the sun which the Almighty

has created. They know not what moment the overseer may order them to receive forty stripes, save one, for not performing more work than perhaps they are able to, in order that their master may supply the christian markets with sugar, cotton, rice, tobacco, rum, brandy, coffee, hemp, and other articles too numerous to mention.

Four millions of slaves producing one hundred dollars each, annually, would be four hundred millions of dollars yearly. We ask the christian public, if this sum is taken from *our* race in one year? What has been taken from them in fifty years!!! comment here is unnecessary,—an enlightened people will estimate for themselves.

We have often heard it asserted, by the enemies of our enslaved and down trodden race, that they are poor, ignorant, degraded, and unfit for freedom; now we put the question to the civilized world, (slaveholders excepted) suppose the many thousand milions of dollars, which have been *wrongfully kept from them* had been properly laid out on their education and moral improvement, would they not, in all probability, be as well qualified for the various stations in life as these unfeeling slave-holders and task masters? It is the want of philantrophy in the slaveholder that causes our degredation, and not the want of capability in our organization; give the coloured population of the world the same opportunities as the white population, and will they not be equal: it is

therefore unjust to charge our race with being unfit to appreciate and enjoy liberty.

Another of the horrifying evils of slavery is amalgamation, and cohabition between father and daughter ! Mother and son ! ! Sister and brother ! ! !

These occurrences happen in consequence of the manner in which they are separated, sold when they are young, and sent into various parts of slave-holding countrys, where they grow up without any knowledge of their relationship; and then amalgamate in the way above mentioned. Good God ! stop the institution of slavery for the sake of thy Son !

And whereas, the American people have often said that Great Britain was the cause of slavery !—This base and foul libel, we have always denied on the ground that when the United States declared in their Declaration of Independence, "that all men are born free and equal," Great Britain agreed to it, and gave *them* their *freedom*, as they call it, but at the same time, did not tell them to hold the African in *bondage*, therefore Great Britain has a *right* to allow slavery to be abolished, in the way we propose, in order to rid herself of the wicked charge of being the cause of perpetual slavery in the United States.

And Whereas, it seems to us, the time has come when Great Britain and her allied friends, should exercise their power and authority to give freedom to the whole of mankind, without distinction of either *kindred* or *color*.

And Whereas, there seems to be great questions to be settled, viz: such as Oregon, Calefornia, and Texas, by negociation or otherways; therefore, we beg leave to add to the catalogue, that of *slavery*. In order to settle these matters, great preparation is necessary; therefore be it

Resolved, That we, the Consultation Committee of Coloured People of Montreal, will petition Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, to authorize the assembling of 100,000 coloured men, and all others who may feel disposed to join us, at Niagara, Upper Canada, for the purpose of putting an end to slavery.

Resolved, That we hope the christian world will sympathise with us, in this philanthrophic move, in order that the holy bible may be freely given to ALL the human race, and thereby promote the Redeemer's kingdom.

Resolved, That we refer our friends to the following passages of Scripture, viz: Jeremiah, chapter 47, concerning the destruction of the Philistines, also the 48th chapter, same book, against Moab; those rules of action, laid down for the correction of evil by the Almighty in bygone years, are intended to be used at any time, when circumstances shall require it, against the wickedness of any nation, when they have filled their cup of iniquity; we would likewise call the attention of our readers to the 5th chapter of the epistle of Saint James.

Resolved, That the Hon. Henry Sherwood, of To-

ronto, and the Hon. T. C. Aylwin, of Quebec, take charge of this Organization, under the control of Her Majesty's Representive.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in all the newspapers friendly to the abolition of slavery.

Resolved, That Mr. Israel Lewis take charge of the Petition, and forward it to Her Most Gracious Majesty, with all possible despatch.

MOSES CARTER, Chairman.

P. J. LEE, Secretary.

N. B.—We, with great respect, say to the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Hume, &c. that we hope they will not repeal the duties on articles produced by American Slave labour, in order to give cheap bread to the poor free labourers of England, such a measure would only increase the miseries of the slaves of America, and encourage the burthen of slavery ten fold. We are opposed to the introduction of any article raised by the American slaves into any part of Her Majesty's dominions under any circumstances.

"God save the Queen."

APPENDIX.

I feel myself called upon to make the following remarks, to my African brethren, in relation to the difficulties that now exist between the British Government and that of the United States: these difficulties seem to be based upon this fact, namely, in not knowing where to strike the division line, so as to suit the claims of these two Nations, as regards the Oregon Territory. Men of great minds, believe that to be the true cause of the disputes which now exist between these two *Powers*. In my opinion, the Oregon question is of *minor* consideration to that which I shall endeavour to show to be the prime cause of the difficulty now existing between these two powerful nations. I refer the reader to one item in President Polk's last Annual Message to both Houses of Congress, where he broaches the subject of the Crowned Heads of Europe; *retaining* or *gaining* the balance of power upon this continent; and concludes his sentence by declaring that no *Crowned* Head shall form or establish another settlement or colony on the continent of North America.

This declaration, in my humble opinion, throws in the shade the opinion, hitherto conceived by many,

that Oregon is the great cause by which the two Nations shall have *war* or *peace*. It is therefore, my settled conviction that the continent of America must be governed by a MONARCHAL or DEMOCRATIC Government; it cannot be supposed by those who understand the materials necessary to constitute these two Governments that they can remain, for any length of time, upon the same continent, as Friends and Brothers. This is a fact that cannot be denied: then it follows, as a matter of course, which I do not hesitate to state, that the great BATTLE must be sooner or later fought on this continent; and an attempt to procrastinate the *time* will be covering up a volcano, that must explode and destroy its millions; and I feel it a duty that I owe to my God, and my coloured brethren, bond and free, to intreat them speedily to decide which side they will take in this great struggle. I hope you will permit me to say that you ought, by all means, to go heart and hand for a Monarchal form of Governmeut; for you have millions of friends and relations in *bondage;* and ships belonging to Democratic Governments, are yearly robbing the shores of Africa of her innocent sons and daughters. I hope we, one and all, will rally round the British flag, and put an end to this *base* and foul traffic in HUMAN FLESH; and that every African or decendant on the American continent, in fifty years, will be governed by British law.

I feel that I cannot conclude without making a

few remarks to our *white friends* upon this subject. You will be called upon to spill your blood on the one side or the other, in the approaching struggle: I now say to you, one and all, if you buckle on your armour to fight against the British Government, in order to bolster up and assist those whose hands and fingers are red with the blood of the enslaved, and down trodden African, you will certainly fail, for God will not side with you. I call upon Bishops, Priests and Ministers of religion, of all denominations and creeds, to act the part, as near as possible, of the Priests, who blew the trumpet (Book of Joshua) of ram's horns; made the walls of Jericho fall, and rescued from the hands of the Cananites that city, called Jericho; who refused to carry out the promise made to the children of Israel by God, through their Father Abraham. The promises, also made by the Prophet Isiah, to the Ethiopian—the African, whose cries, in consequence of hard bondage, have gone up to Heaven. Again I say to you Ministers, who are Heralds of benevolence, in the cause of God, to fully act your part, from the pulpit, in order that the promise made unto the Ethiopian shall be fully verified, and the Redeemer's Kingdom advanced. and long may the British flag triumphantly float over all the world as an emblem of personal liberty to all men.

God save the Queen, and all her Loyal Subjects.

ISRAEL LEWIS, *Coloured Man.*

Montreal, April, 1846.

Extracts from the Constitution of the United States and their Declaration of Independence :—

"Article I.—Section 1.—The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the *people* of the several states, and the electors in each state shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature."

This section has not been complied with. Now I contend that the coloured population of these United States are *people*, and yet they are denied the right of franchise and liberty; the Declaration of Independence, notwithstanding, which reads as follow: "We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, *liberty*, and the pursuit of happiness." Are they not very consistent?

"Article I.—Section 9.—The migration or *importation* of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a tax or duty may be imposed on *such importation*, not exceeding ten dollars for each person."

Here I broadly assert that, in defiance of this broad declaration, made by the same uncontrolled assembly, they have left a door open, by which an important

part of mankind may be held in bondage for life or perpetually, as the case may be.

"Section 8.—No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States."

Vain and false notions of rewarding merit! which appears from the fact that they make laws to hold men in SLAVERY, while at the same time they refuse to grant titles of distinction to men who have merited them by acts of benevolence and bravery.

"ARTICLE IV.—Section 3.—No person held to service or labour in one state under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labour, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due."

I would particularly call the attention of mankind to the above wicked clause, found in the Constitution of a People, who style themselves free and enlightened, and who assert their desire to promote and spread freedom throughout the world!

The literal definition of the above section must, by every intelligent mind, be understood thus, viz:

Any person who shall escape voluntarily, from one State to another, shall be pursued by letters patent, under the great seal of the State, and by authority of the Chief Magistrate of that State, and the *unoffending* party brought back to the State from which he fled, be given up to his master, and compelled to labour during life, for one to whom he is under no natural obligation whatever.

Is this according to the Scriptures which say—"do unto others as you would have others do unto you." I think not,—and therefore I call upon every christian, statesman, patriot and philanthropist, to do his best to stop this procedure against the African race.

RESULT OF EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH COLONIES

The following extract, from an important document recently issued by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, will, I trust, be read with interest:

"We contemplate once more the vast blessing which has been conferred on upwards of 700,000 human beings, by the great act of emancipation. The whip no longer sounds in their ears, as the stimulant to labour and the instrument of torture; the fetter no longer galls their limbs; the market-place no longer beholds them submitted for sale, in lots to suit purchasers; the anguish of forcible separation is no longer felt or feared; instruction is no longer interdicted; the preaching of the Gospel is no longer forbidden. Masters of their own persons and their own labour, the emancipated slaves can now bestow it when and where they please, as may best suit their taste, or serve their interests—the marriage-tie hallows and blesses their unions—the relations of parents and children exist, and cannot be severed by the caprice or will of slave-masters—the chastity woman can no longer be violated with impunity, nor the hearts of mothers lacerated by the base and degrading uses to which their offspring where devoted. These are some of the precious fruits of emancipation. And let it be remembered, that the liberty, with all its present and future privileges and blessings, which has been conferred on the existing generation, will be transmitted to their children, and their children's children, to the remotest generations. It were to view this great subject in its lowest and most sordid light, to

make the measure of its necessity and value depend on the amount of exportable produce raised in the British Colonies.—What would have been the condition of the West India body at this time had not the abolition of slavery taken place? In 1832, they were on the verge of ruin, their credit in the money-market utterly gone, and their slaves decreasing at the rate of 5,000 per annum. They had stimulated production by the most cruel means to its utmost limit to cover the interest due to mortgagees and merchants in the mother country, and to meet the current expenditure of their estates; and with what effect, let Lord Stanley say, 'In all the islands there had been a general increase in the production of sugar, and a *corresponding decrease in the amount of the labouring population.*' The medium slave-population, in Jamaica, during the 3 years ending June, 1826, was 333,393, and the average quantity of sugar raised was 1,354,448 cwts. The medium population during three years ending June, 1832, was 327,464, the average amount of sugar raised was 1,410,026 cwts.! Demerara showed a more frightful result. For the first period referred to, the slave-population was 72,722, the quantity of sugar raised, 552,336 cwts.; for the second period, the population had decreased to 67,741, and they were compelled to produce 806,-120, cwts. of sugar! Now what did emancipation do when it arrested in its course this murderous system? Did it complete the ruin of the West India body? No! It restored their lost credit. It took from them the weapon with which they were destroying themselves, and we venture to say, that were the alternative placed before them this hour, of returning to the system which has been abolished, they would utterly refuse it on the mere ground of pecuniary gain. But slavery has been abolished throughout the British Colonies, and the songs of freemen have succeeded the wailings of slaves. The rights of humanity have been vendicated—the demands of justice have been met—and the claims of religion have been regarded; the person, the liberty, the property of the late slave have been rendered invioable; and now under the protection of impartial law, he can sit as a free man beneath the shade of his own palm-tree, 'none daring to make him afraid.'"

Lines on Slavery.

I was born myself an American slave,
The rights of man I cannot wave;
And I shall with my feeble might,
Aid every SLAVE to make his flight.

Slavery does every dungeon fill,
Created by the Sovereign's will;
Slavery made without a crime,
Is the worst that man can find.

The Eagle's wings that covers this,
Should be made the earth to kiss;
And never rise to earthly bliss,
Because their conduct is amiss!

May the Lion with his roar,
Eclipse this BIRD in its soar;
This FOWL we do not wish kill,
But let mankind have FREEDOM still.

ISRAEL LEWIS.